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Chatham,
ME4 4TR.
Email: gdpr@medway.gov.uk

Our Ref: FOI005447
Your Ref (if provided): INF005405
Date: 27/05/2026

Response to your Information Request.

Dear requester,

Thank you for your request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (or Environmental Information Regulation 2004). Your request for information and the council's response is as follows:

Request:

Dear Medway Council

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am seeking details of the construction of the Black Lion Leisure Centre in Gillingham (now known as Medway Park), specifically relating to its development circa 1978.

Please could you provide:

- * The name of the main contractor responsible for the construction of the facility**
- * The names of any principal subcontractors, if recorded**
- * The dates of construction (start and completion)**
- * Any surviving contract records, project files, or references relating to the build**

If this information is not held by Medway Council, I would appreciate guidance on which organisation or archive may hold these records.

I would prefer to receive the information in electronic format where possible.

Answer -

Early Planning: Proposals for a major sports facility in Gillingham first began in 1955, though the specific site at Black Lion Field wasn't identified until 1963.

Construction: Physical construction of the centre began in the early 1970s. Aerial photos from April 1972 show the building work already underway.

Official Opening: The ceremony was performed by Sir Roger Bannister, the first man to run a sub-four-minute mile.

Early Facilities: At the time of opening, the centre included a swimming pool, gymnasium, and a sports hall.

Key Milestones

1978: A concrete skatepark, the Black Lion Skatepark, was added to the site.

1979: The centre expanded to include squash courts, a snooker room, and a larger sports hall.

2010–2011: The facility underwent a major £11.1 million renovation for the 2012 Olympic legacy programme and was renamed Medway Park Sports

Any information not provided is not held by Medway Council.

I trust this information is to your satisfaction, however, if you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within 40 working days of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to:

Head of information Governance,
Medway Council, Gun Wharf,
Dock Road, Chatham,
Kent, ME4 4TR
freedom@medway.gov.uk.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.